



THE RECOVERY NETWORK FOUNDATION PRESENTS:

UNDER THE INFLUENCE

THE FILM SERIES

AT THE AFI SILVER THEATRE
AND CULTURAL CENTER
SILVER SPRING, MD

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FEATURES, DOCUMENTARIES AND SHORTS IN WHICH ADDICTION AND RECOVERY PLAY A LEADING ROLE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BLAKE EDWARDS INTRODUCES HIS *DAYS OF WINE AND ROSES* *AT UNDER THE INFLUENCE: THE FILM SERIES.*

(New York, NY — July 11, 2005) — *Days of Wine and Roses*, one of the all-time great Warner Brothers films, will be the premiere presentation of *Under the Influence: The Film Series*, an unprecedented showcase of feature films and documentaries in which addiction and recovery play leading roles. The film's legendary director, **Blake Edwards**, will be on hand to introduce his 1962 film, considered a trailblazer in its treatment of alcoholism and the possibility of recovery. Following the screening, Mr. Edwards will discuss his own recovery. (After directing *Days of Wine and Roses*, Edwards became a "non-drinker.")

The festival, presented by the Recovery Network Foundation, begins September 13 at 6:30pm at the American Film Institute Silver Theater, 8633 Colesville Road, Silver Spring, MD.

This searing adaptation of J.P. Miller's teleplay, with Oscar-nominated performances by Jack Lemmon and Lee Remick, "remains one of the most gut-wrenching dramas of alcohol-related ruin and recovery ever captured on film," said Margaret Parsons, film curator at the National Gallery of Art and guest curator of *Under the Influence*. "It's also one of the pioneering films of the genre."

"As *The Lost Weekend* heightened public understanding of alcoholism, films like *Days of Wine and Roses* were among the very first to portray Alcoholics Anonymous' potential role in alcoholism recovery," said historian William L. White, author of the seminal "Slaying the Dragon: The History of Addiction Treatment and Recovery in America." "These films were milestones in the American consciousness about alcoholism. They fueled the modern recognition of alcoholism as a major public health problem."

The festival's September launch will be a signature event in the 16th annual celebration of National Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Month (Recovery Month) sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), a co-sponsor of *Under the Influence*. Other festival sponsors include the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, whose president, Stacia Murphy, is the festival's Honorary Chairwoman; the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA); the National Association on Alcohol, Drugs and Disability; the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, the Johnson Institute; Caron Recovery Center; the Hanley Center; Faces and Voices of Recovery; the Hazelden Foundation; and the Recovery Channel (TV production partner of the Recovery Network Foundation).

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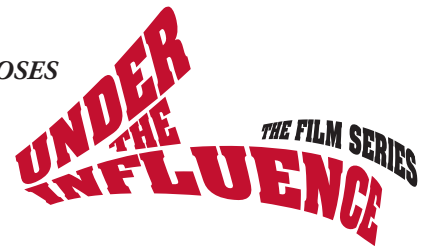
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"SAMHSA is pleased to support this Recovery Month event because it adds yet another type of effort to bring the message of recovery to the public," noted SAMHSA Administrator, Charles Curie. "We need to continue to expand the public discourse about addictions and the miracle of recovery throughout America so that more substance-dependent individuals can overcome the stigma of addiction and seek help for this disease."

Margaret Parsons, renowned film curator at the National Gallery of Art is guest curator of *Under the Influence: The Film Series*. Special advisers to the festival include the pioneer documentary filmmaker Albert Maysles; Catherine Wyler, producer and artistic director of the High Falls Film Festival in Rochester, NY; and William L. White, author and noted addiction, treatment and recovery historian.

"Support for the film series has been avalanche-like," said Robyn Leary, president of the Recovery Network Foundation and executive producer of *Under the Influence*. "Not only are people interested in this showcase of serious cinema, they're also responding at a gut level to the idea of using film to examine our values and social conditioning with respect to addiction. *Under the Influence* aims to advance the national discussion on addiction-recovery and extinguish the stigma surrounding this disease, a stigma born of ignorance that has crippled generations and prevented people from getting the help they need.

"For decades," she continued, "addiction was considered a moral weakness and in many sectors still is. Through the work of NIDA, the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism and others, we now have scientific evidence to support the classification of addiction as a brain disease."

Other films under consideration to be screened are:

- *Bird*, Clint Eastwood's portrait of jazz great Charlie Parker;
- *Drugstore Cowboy*, Gus van Sant's gritty landscape of dope-fiend society;
- *Bigger Than Life*, Nicholas Ray's neglected masterpiece of a cortisone-addicted character played by James Mason;
- *Requiem for a Dream*, Darren Aronofsky's uncompromising exploration of the addictions that hide behind each of life's corners;
- *21 Grams*, Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu's unsparing depiction of three different kinds of addicts;
- *This So-Called Disaster*, Michael Almereyda's documentary about the staging of Sam Shepard's family-addiction play, *The Late Henry Moss*;
- *Clean and Sober*, Glenn Gordon Caron's rollicking interpretation of addiction, surrender and recovery, starring Michael Keaton.
- *Under the Volcano*, John Huston's evocative adaptation of Malcolm Lowry's novel about the last day in the life of an alcoholic diplomat in 1930s Mexico.
- *I Am a Sex Addict*, Caveh Zahedi's autobiographical screwball comedy about a twenty-something man who recovers from his addiction to sex with prostitutes (Washington, D.C.-area premiere).

Panel discussions will follow all screenings, with filmmakers, recovery advocates, addiction and mental health superstars, public policy-makers and other experts, focusing on, among other things, how the films in question enhance or subvert the precepts and goals of recovery from alcoholism, drug and other addictions.

Following the D.C.-area launch, *Under the Influence* will embark on a national tour of select cities and college campuses across the U.S.

Under the Influence is free and open to the public. Up to two tickets per person will be available at the box-office of the 200-seat theater one hour before show time.